

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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PASS SMITHSONIAN FOR COERR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OSCI, TBIO, TS

SUBJECT:SMITHSONIAN/SFCP - ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR SMITH-
SONIAN GRANTEES

REFS: TUNIS 385; STATE 98391

1. MENEZ, NOVIKOFF AND EMBASSY CONCUR IN ESTABLISHMENT OF SMALL ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (BAKAR AND DARGHOUTH) TO PROVIDE SOME MODEST ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR ALL PROJECTS IN TUNISIA UNDER SMI AUSPICES AFTER TERMINATION OF MMSC. ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP WOULD COME UNDER WAGNER GRANT. ALTHOUGH CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR FOR WAGNER PROJECT IS NO LONGER MOHAMED SZKOURI, NOVIKOFF HAS DISCUSSED PROPOSAL WITH HIS REPLACEMENT, STAMRAD, DIRECTOR IF INRAT, WHO HAS EXPRESSED HIS AGREEMENT. WHILE STAMRAD AGREEABLE TO SIGNING IMPORT DECLARATIONS AND OTHER TRANSACTIONS FOR ALL PROJECTS, ANY MAJOR IMPORTS ETC. WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO BE HANDLED BY TUNISIAN COOPERATING INSTITUTION FOR EACH PROJECT. EMBASSY CLEARLY CAN NOT RPT NOT CLEAR IMPORTS NOR BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OTHER OFFICIAL TRANSACTIONS WITH GOT.

2. HOURLY BASIS ACCEPTABLE TO BAKAR AND DARGHOUTH WITH GUARANTEE OF 120 HOURS MINIMUM AND 160 HOURS MAXIMUM EACH MONTH. DOES SMI INTEND THAT BAKAR AND DARGHOUTH WOULD RECEIVE YEAR-END BONUSES WHILE BEING PAID ON HOURLY BASIS? BUDGET FOR SUPPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP WILL
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BE FORTHCOMING WITH DETAILS.

3. HOPE TO BE ABLE PLACE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP IN ASOR PROJECT FACILITIES SINCE WAGNER PROJECT HAS NO FACILITIES AND USE OF NOVIKOFF HOME INCONVENIENT. IF ASOR AND SMI APPROVE PROPOSAL (SEPTTEL) THAT ASOR TAKE OVER LEASE FOR MMSC BUILDING, SPACE COULD BE FOUND FOR BAKAR AND DARGHOUTH THERE. CONTINUED OCCUPANCY OF MMSC BUILDING BY ASOR WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL FOR WAGNER PROJECT WHICH MAY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR STUDENTS AND OTHER PROJECT PURPOSES IN TUNIS AREA. RECOMMENDATION FOR TRANSFER OF SOME EQUIPMENT FROM MMSC TO ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (WHEREVER LOCATED) FROM MMSC HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH EMBASSY, WHICH CONCURS IN PRINCIPLE.

4. MENEZ HAS DISCUSSED WITH EMBASSY POSSIBILITY OF STORING MMSC FURNITURE, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES UNDER EMBASSY AUSPICES UNTIL LAWSUIT OF HEDIA BACCAR AGAINST MMSC FINALLY RESOLVED. EMBASSY ACCEPTS INPRINCIPLE, BUT STORAGE OF SUCH LARGE QUANTITIES OF MATERIAL WOULD POSE SPACE PROBLEMS FOR EMBASSY WHICH MIGHT HAVE TO SEEK ADDITIONAL STORAGE ON COMMERCIAL BASIS. IN ANY CASE EMBASSY WOULD REQUIRE APPROPRIATE REIMBURSEMENT BY SMI FOR STORAGE OF MMSC EFFECTS UNDER A DIRECT COST OR SHARED ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ARRANGEMENT. ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE OF PROPOSED TAKE-OVER OF MMSC BUILDING BY ASOR NOTED PARA 3 ABOVE IS THAT ALLMMSC EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES COULD BE KEPT THERE PENDING FINAL RESOLUTION OF BACCAR LAWSUIT.

5. LETTERS FROM SMI PROJECT OFFICERS WITH FURTHER DETAILS FOLLOW.

6. EMBASSY COMMENT FOR STATE DEPARTMENT NEA/AFN AND SCI AND INFO SMI, COERR: WE ARE AGREEABLE TO ARRANGEMENTS AS NOTED ABOVE AND HOPE THESE WILL FACILITATE ADMINISTRATION OF CONTINUING SMI PROJECTS IN TUNISIA. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF POSSIBILITY THAT GOT MAY EVENTUALLY OBJECT TO TUNISIAN COUNTERPART FOR WAGNER PROJECT HANDLING WIDELY DIVERSIFIED SMI PROJECTS AND BECAUSE OF WORK LOAD IMPOSED ON EMBOFFS BY ALL SFC PROJECTS GENERALLY, UNCLASSIFIED

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EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO POSSIBLY ESTABLISHING ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (BAKAR AND DARGHOUTH) UNDER EMBASSY AUSPICES TO SERVE ALL SFC PROJECTS. GROUP COULD BE LOCATED IN EMBASSY. SINCE BAKAR AND DARGHOUTH WOULD BE RETAINED ON CONTRACT BASIS AND WOULD BE PAID OUT OF SFCP FUNDS, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD THEY APPLY AGAINST POST'S LOCAL EMPLOYEE COMPLEMENT. SEELYE

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